SOLIDARITY WITH
DANIELA KLETTE

from every corner of the earth...
for every persecuted fighter...

with whatever weapons at hand

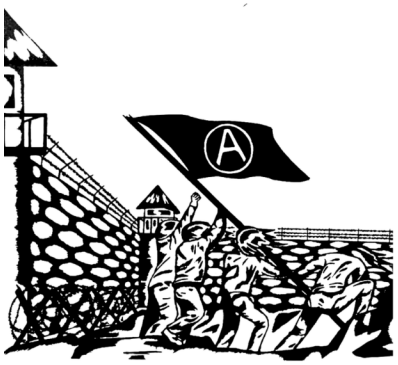

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Table of Contents

p. 4 Solidarity with Daniela Klette

p. 10 Letter from Daniela Klette to the Rosa Luxemburg Congress, January 2025

p. 12 "The Possibility of a Historic Moment is Now": A Call for Solidarity with Daniela Klette from Burkard Garweg, March 2025

p. 34 Letter from Daniela Klette to the Rosa Luxemburg Congress, January 2026

p. 38 Letter from Burkhard Garweg to the Rosa Luxemburg Congress, January 2026

Solidarity with Daniela Klette!

Daniel Klette was arrested in Germany in 2024 after 30 years underground. She's accused of having been a member of the RAF, a militant German group the waged armed struggle in the 1980's. Both her repressive prison conditions and the criminalization of her supporters show the German state's intent to destroy a history of struggle and to create a rift between new generations of militants and those who preceded them. We share this collection to express our support for Daniela and help to spread her story, expose the German state's brutal repression, and to reforge links between different generations and different countries.

Write to Daniela

Daniela Klette
Justizvollzugssanstault Für Frauen
An Der Propstei 10
49377 Vechta
Germany

primary target today is Daniela. The state's attempt to imprison Daniela for many years affects us all as leftists from various movements. Her imprisonment and the threatened verdicts are unjust. The first trial is nearing its end: Support Daniela! Scrutinize the justice system, monitor the trials in whatever way you can. Show solidarity. Create visible public awareness. Stand up to this collectively and find forms of resistance. The apparent intention to condemn resistance history in the trials against Daniela, and the attempt to use repression as a deterrent in times of crisis, in light of escalating violence, demand solidarity and the protection that can only be achieved through attention and public awareness. Nothing less than freedom for Daniela Klette is justified. All imprisoned comrades, wherever they may be in the world, deserve nothing less than freedom, while the entire prison system deserves to go to hell.

A moment of great sorrow for the revolutionary movements is the death of Rolf Becker, whose profound and deep solidarity we recognized and valued even in the underground. He will be missed by this left, by us. I am also thinking of Devran, Brigitte Asdonk, and Assata Shakur, who recently passed away. They, too, will be missed. All of you who have died as part of our long, worldwide history of resistance remain immortal in the liberation struggles of the present and the future.

Resistance against genocide, apartheid, Germany's complicity, against the "war-readiness" of the ruling class, against exploitation, social cutbacks, and against patriarchal structures of violence is necessary and justified! Together for a world without capitalism, war, and patriarchy!

Fuck off, German raison d'état and every kind of fatherland! Freedom for all our imprisoned comrades worldwide, and the end of the entire prison system for all! Freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal! Freedom for Daniela Klette!

Burkhard Garweg

January 2026

Who Is Daniela Klette?

Daniela became politicized in her youth. In West Germany in the 1970's, she committed herself to struggles for prisoners' rights, better prison conditions, and against the use of solitary confinement for political prisoners. In 1980, she participated in a protest against the international meeting of the European Convention on Human Rights. The opening ceremony of the ECHR at Paulus Church in Frankfurt, attended by President Carstens, was majorly disrupted by protests opposing the solitary confinement of political prisoners and demanding their regroupment. The action ended with arrests. It was only later that solitary confinement was condemned as torture by Amnesty International, as it is internationally recognized today.

At that time, Daniela regularly visited and corresponded with Red Army Faction prisoners. Her desire to be involved in the anti-imperialist struggle, the urban guerrilla, and to search for possibilities of vanquishing injustice accompanied Daniela throughout all these years. The state murders of Ulrike Meinhof, Holger Meins, Andreas Baader, Gudrung Enslin, Jan-Carl Raspe, Sigurd Debus, the shootings that killed Willy Peter Stoll, Michael Knoll, Elisabeth van Deck, Wolfgang Grams, and gravely wounded Günter Sonnenberg were decisive moments for Daniela that showed the true face of the post-Nazi German state. Daniela was also involved in internationalist struggles in support of anti-colonial liberation movements. In the 1980's, she took part in actions boycotting Israeli products in German stores and protested in support of Palestine and El Salvador, while participating in many demonstrations against American imperialism.

During this time, she also fought against the planned expansion of the Frankfurt Airport. Within this struggle, she fought against imperialist wars in Africa and the Middle East and more specifically against the use of the Frankfurt Airpot as military headquarters for US operations. She pursued many different methods of struggle, participating in occupations, and taking part in the wider anti-war and peace movements. She also became active in protesting NATO when its decisions to deploy nuclear missiles in Europe during negotiations to limit long-range American nuclear weapons increased the likelihood of nuclear war against the Soviet Union. In this era, it was a criminal offense to support political prisoners' hunger strikes, while mere graffiti tags risked years in prison, particularly tagging "ZL" (an abbreviation of "Zuammenlegung," "regroupment"[1]). Despite severe repression, Daniela never let herself be intimated and always showed courage and resolve that prisoners would not be abandoned.

1. One of the primary demands of collective hunger strikes waged by political prisoners from the armed struggle in Western Europe during this era was for political prisoners to be grouped together outside of individual solitary confinement.

Arrest

30 years after international arrest warrants were first issued against Burkhard Garweg, Ernst-Volker Staub, and Daniela Klette, Daniela was arrested in Berlin on February 28, 2024. For 30 years she lived underground to avoid capture.

Today, Daniela is 66 years old. She is accused of having participated in bank robberies following the dissolution of the RAF in March 1998. This is the basis for which the Verden public prosecutor's office has charged her, along with Ernst-Volker Staub and Burkhart Garweg, with armed robbery and attempted murder. Daniela rejects these charges.

> *"The Verden prosecutor is fabricating a history in which I, along with Volker Staub and Burkhart Garweg—who are still being actively hunted by the state with extensive resources and an extensive smear campaign in the media—was supposedly a member of a ruthless criminal gang. 26 years after the RAF dissolved, the state is relying on its escalation creating disunity. The prosecutor claims that we were willing to kill in order to obtain money to survive underground. For those who trace their roots to the legacy of leftist revolutionaries in West Germany this would never have been conceivable. It's exactly the opposite: in the fight for liberation, the most important thing is fighting for a world without greed, without money, free from all exploitation and submission."*
>
> *— Daniela Klette, August 2024*

Thus, the criminal proceedings in Verden pursued by the state government of Lower Saxony are in reality subordinated to the state prosecutor's political interests. Daniela is also being charged by the Karlsruhe prosecutor's office for attempted murder and other criminal offenses related to RAF actions in the 1990's.

According to the media, these actions include bombing the new high-security prison in Weiterstadt and the shooting at the American embassy in Bonn, neither of which caused any injuries. These charges are still being investigated.

The courts are prosecuting the two cases separately, as one falls under federal jurisdiction while the other involves state charges.

We're thus now looking at two cases that could drag on for years.

Two Trials

In February 2024, the Verden prosecutor's office issued an increasing number of subpoenas to testify in the case against Daniela, Burkhard Garweg, and Volker Staub. The simple fact of living on Hafenstraße in Hamburg is reason enough to receive a subpoena. As far as we know, two search warrants have been carried out in Hamburg

exploited of the world enabled Western dominance. In its place, we are witnessing the establishment of the militarized, war-oriented, repressive, and authoritarian state of order and control of our time. It is the return of the proletariat as cannon fodder for the power of billionaires and shareholders, of intensified exploitation in the relations of production, of the decline of the welfare state, of the exacerbation of patriarchal power structures, and of state and societal racism that oppresses and threatens large segments of the population.

A comrade in hiding aptly wrote for a rally from the perspective of antifascist resistance: "As the situation escalates, fascism is once again becoming a viable option for domination. Antifascist practice means not only taking militant action against the Nazis, but doing so in close cooperation with revolutionary grassroots work in order to offer an alternative." We must understand that a good life for all will never be found in capitalist sham democracy…

The alternative is our global task, and it is a socialism that could be rich in historical experience and also in overcoming the major and minor mistakes of history —the large and small attempts at revolution, the urban guerrillas, the anarchists, the communists, the social revolutionaries, and the anti-patriarchal and anti-colonial struggles and movements. Achieving this will ultimately determine whether life on this planet will continue to be possible and under what conditions. We are at a critical juncture globally. The question for all of us worldwide about the alternative to capitalism and the systemic processes leading to it, as well as our own, is existential and cannot be postponed.

The system of repression will foreseeably intensify further in the wake of the crisis of capitalism. We see this in the repression against our friend and comrade Daniela Klette. A fabricated and false accusation of intent to kill, invented by the police and public prosecutor's office, and an absurd portrayal of our dangerousness are intended to justify a long imprisonment and a corresponding sentence against Daniela.

Despite protestations to the contrary by the judicial authorities, this state will stems from the fact that, for this state and its executive branch, the enemy is fundamentally wherever capitalism and the state's monopoly on the use of force are challenged. It is this same judiciary, led by the Federal Prosecutor's Office, that will open another trial against Daniela in a few months, threatening her once again with life imprisonment for militant actions that took place more than 30 years ago.

It is a true mockery that the Federal Prosecutor's Office is seeking to secure a long prison sentence for Daniela for actions she is accused of decades ago. No one was harmed during the resistance actions against war, prisons, and capitalism. The injustices against which these actions were directed, however, killed millions through war, brought hunger to millions, or created yet another monstrous prison system.

The state is determined to prosecute resistance even decades later. This leads it into an aggressive and repressive pattern of police and judicial behavior, whose

Letter from Burkhard Garweg to the Rosa Luxemburg Congress

Dear comrades,

I send you warm greetings from underground.

We, who are persecuted as militants of the past, as well as the wanted antifascist comrades, are forced to live underground today by the repression of an increasingly authoritarian state. In Germany today, living underground is a necessary defensive position.

For 30 years, despite many adversities, we lived a life characterized by solidarity – beyond the isolation and exploitation inherent in capitalism. Now, this is held against us. Nevertheless, we could imagine something other than battling our way through the sometimes thorny thicket of illegality and, inevitably, prison. That's how it was, and that's how it is.

It was and is the apparatus of repression that forces us into illegality and bears sole responsibility for it. Or should we surrender ourselves to a state whose police and prosecutors openly threaten us with execution by special forces upon arrest? A state whose police and prosecutors lie through their teeth so that even the last person believes the state's version of our brutality. The aim is to denounce the history of resistance. They are trying to divide us from the rest of the world, they are striving to cement us in their prisons forever. All I can say is: Don't believe a word they say. Given the reality of repression and state terrorism, we naturally have a right to live illegally.

For three decades, we have responsibly managed the necessity of organizing our lives and our survival. This is also proven by the results, which expose the police and prosecutorial narrative of our dangerousness for what it is: a fabricated lie. One wouldn't have to take it seriously if they weren't using it to threaten our imprisoned comrade Daniela Klette with a long prison sentence. The talk about our dangerousness as a fabrication in the upcoming two legal trials against Daniela is nothing but denunciation.

We, who are persecuted and harassed as "terrorists" both in prison and while living illegally, have nothing to do with terror or terrorism. It is not we who, through the means of the police, the judiciary, the military, intelligence services, and politics, are willing to enforce a system that, in the current erosion of capitalism, will only produce more misery and violence. It is grotesque to call ourselves "terrorists." The real terror lies in the normality of the capitalist system. And terrorists, therefore, would surely be those who bring this terror to its culmination.

This is the era of the replacement of the "welfare state" system of a bygone epoch, in which the pacification of the metropolises at the expense of the colonized and

in this context. The Verden prosecutor, Marquard, has been particularly ruthless in this respect. In one of the Hamburg raids, during which the person of interest was held for hours and pressured to agree to an interrogation in exchange for the search warrant being rescinded, Mme. Marquardt traveled to Hamburg herself in order to be present for the raid.

She even asked former RAF members to tell Burkhard Garweg and Volker Staub to turn themselves in as soon as possible with the implicit threat, "We don't want another Bad Kleinen, do we?" (A reference to Wolfgang Grams, a member of the RAF who was killed in 1993 during an attempted arrested in Bad Kleinen.)

Simply visiting or submitting a request to visit Daniela is enough to receive a subpoena, as we've recently witnessed.

Prison Conditions

Daniela's imprisonment began with solitary confinement, 24-hour video surveillance of her cell, no daylight, and a full communication ban. She was denied access to even a pen and paper for weeks. It wasn't until a demonstration was called (and a counter-protest by the CDU) that her prison conditions were publicized and subsequently somewhat eased. The organizer of the support demo outside of the prison was fired from their job and was banned from visiting Daniela as a result, with the pretext that she was planning an escape. When she was summoned to testify about this, she refused to make any statements, for which she was fined 500 euros. Usually, it takes between 10 and 12 weeks for Daniela to receive her mail, if the letters aren't confiscated in advance. Visitation requests from the few who are unintimidated must receive three levels of approval from the authorities, each of which is regularly delayed. The Lower Saxony Minister of Justice commented, "The protests are manageable thus far… They mostly seem to consist of old-timers lingering about in front of the prison. At this stage, we haven't yet witnessed any organized solidarity movement from the younger generations." The aim of the state's intimidation campaign seems to be preventing any broad expression of solidarity and especially any connections being made with younger generations in the struggle.

Unlike other cases, Daniela now finds herself isolated after 30 years underground, without the possibility of politically relying on the support of current struggles. This also reflects the fear, at least of the state's repressive apparatus, of younger generations supporting Daniela who might recognize this political show trial as an attack on the history of struggle and, in this sense, also an attack against their own struggles. This is why all visits are filmed and must be held in the presence of the BKA and LKA (regional police), which is also standard for other political prisoners. There have already been attempts to detain visitors for interrogation immediately after their visitation. The prosecutor has even used letters containing the lyrics, for instance, of

an anti-militarist song as pretext to criminalize supporters.

We don't yet know when either of the trials against Daniela will begin. What we do know is there is no hope for Daniela to receive a fair trial—just like for Burkhard Garweg and Volker Staub, both of whom are still underground. The courts are trying to portray Daniela as a ruthless murderer and thief. This is a complete lie.

Currently, the state is doing everything it can to politically isolate Daniella and present her as an ordinary prisoner facing routine criminal charges. In this sense, everything is aimed at cutting Daniela off from any political dialogue and therefore to deprive her of the ability to defend herself politically. The two spectacular show trials looming on the horizon have to be held in a completely new context. They can't be held in Stammheim Prison, since this risks reviving the buried history of the RAF. It's no surprise that the Verden prosecutor's office is having difficulty finding a building big enough for the trial and is even thinking about building a new one specifically for this purpose. The class-based justice system's search for an ideal venue is aimed at staging a spectacular show trial that might vanquish all resistance—past and future. They're seeking to depoliticize and punish the history of all struggles since 1968, whether liberation struggles, ecological or social struggles, or political prisoners' struggles. Fueled by their fear of social revolt, they want to create a generational rift by criminalizing past struggles, to stop the spark from re-igniting, to prevent society from rising up in the fight for a society liberated from the patriarchy, NATO, and capital.

Free Daniela Now! History Is Written in Practice

On September 5, 1972, the "Black September" commando took the Israeli Olympic team hostage in Munich to demand the release of 234 Palestinian prisoners from the Israeli dungeons and the release of Ulrike Meinhof and Andreas Baader. The German state responded with a massacre, killing almost all of the Palestinians and the hostages.

The struggle of the 2nd of June Movement and Rote Zora (RZ) were internationalist from the very beginning. Because of the 2nd of June Movement's contacts with the Palestinian resistance, the prisoners who were released after they kidnapped the president of the CDU in February 1975 were welcomed in South Yemen. The RZ collaborated with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), the second strongest faction in the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). This led to the controversial hijacking of an airplane from Israel to Entebbe, Uganda in 1976, which resulted in another massacre perpetrated by Israeli soldiers, after which RZ as an organization split. On June 2, 1980, the 2nd of June Movement dissolved, some of its members joining the ranks of the RAF.

living conditions, which are meant to exclude me from political discussions.

I am eager to learn about the international contributions and your debates, and I wish you interesting and productive discussions and a good time at this year's Rosa Luxemburg Conference.

Warm, supportive, and militant greetings,

Daniela Klette

January 2026

Outwardly, the so-called Western community of values relies on the military option to maintain or enforce power. From the perspective of this policy of the militarily stronger, millions are to become cannon fodder—and this time again in the core Western European countries, as we already know from the two world wars started by Germany. However irrational it may be, the willingness to drive the world into the abyss for the profit of the few lies in the logic of capitalist domination; "capitalism carries war within it like a cloud carries rain." (Jean Jaurès)

Many are imprisoned in prison complexes worldwide in connection with diverse stories of resistance against the madness of capitalism. Mumia Abu-Jamal, a political prisoner in the USA for 44 years; Ahmad Saadat, a prisoner from the Palestinian resistance of the PFLP in Israel; the Filton 24 – prisoners from the Palestine Action movement in England (who are on hunger strike at the time of the RLK); the "Ulm 5"; Maja, Hanna, and all other antifascists; Andreas Krebs and his imprisoned comrades Marianna, Dimitra, and Dimitris Chatzivasileiadis in Greece; the prisoners of the GRAPO/PCR in Spain and the BR in Italy, who have been imprisoned for decades; the imprisoned comrades in Turkey, who have been on hunger strike for months against isolation torture and special detention centers; the imprisoned Kurdish comrades in German prisons; and the thousands of prisoners on every continent whom I cannot list here. They all live amidst this capitalist madness. They all need a perspective of international social liberation and the prospect of freedom.

Solidarity gives us the strength to survive this madness, and a counter-public sphere provides protection. All over the world, people are more urgently than ever faced with the question of how to overcome these turbulent, destructive conditions. And this question concerns me as well. I think several things will be crucial: doing everything possible to prevent World War III and all its accompanying consequences. It's essential to continue resisting the genocide in Gaza, which is being carried out under the guise of a supposed ceasefire, and the gradual annexation of the West Bank by Israel, and to halt the progressive destruction of our ecological foundations. Stopping the aggression and destruction will only be possible through large, collective, and internationalist movements.

I also believe it's important that those who have been involved in the struggles for a long time take on the responsibility of answering the questions of younger generations about why we haven't succeeded to date, and to work out, as clearly and carefully as possible, what mistakes were made that must not be repeated, and what objective obstacles we must overcome in new ways. This is, of course, a process that takes time. And it must also consciously focus on paths to human emancipation, on discovering what we can bring into the world that transcends life in capitalist society and under its rules, and that can overcome the belief in the seemingly quasi-natural (or, more recently, divinely ordained) power of this system.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts here, despite my isolating

The RAF considered itself as part of the global liberation front, and maintained close contacts with other leftist resistance organizations in West Europe and the Middle East. The Palestinian resistance was part of these alliances, with whom the RAF expressed their solidarity in numerous texts and communiqués. Obviously, in the years that followed, many mistakes were made that impacted the armed struggle and the wider resistance and protest movements. But those who take action to advance the class struggle and commit their lives to the revolution won't find any ready-made script that explains exactly how to do it. With this in mind, despite many internal and external contradictions the wider resistance and social struggles always showed solidarity with prisoners from the armed struggle. Hijacking Lufthansa Flight 181 in the autumn of 1977, the PFLP participated once more in the "German Autumn," attempting to secure the release of the RAF prisoners at Stammheim Prison. Their attempt failed, and the RAF prisoners were murdered by the West German state. In retaliation, the RAF executed Hans-Martin Schleyer (German business executive, Minister of the Economy, and former SS officer). His corpse was found in the back trunk of an Audi in Mulhouse, France.

Thus began the so-called "years of lead," during which the entire internationalist resistance movement was massively criminalized in Germany. In 1982, inspired by the struggle against forced conscription in Bremen in 1980, the RAF published a call to build an "anti-imperialist front" in Western Europe in the underground journal, Papier de Mai. This was also in reaction to NATO's decision to deploy nuclear warheads in Europe during negotiations to limit American long-range nuclear weapons. The French armed organization Action Directe released joint communiqués with the RAF as part of the anti-imperialist front, claiming actions in both Germany and France, and also materially supported the hunger strikes of their German comrades. After Minister of Justice Kinkel's initiative to ease the conflict through less-repressive means, the RAF began to follow a more moderate line and renounced attacks against people after 1992. By March 1998, the RAF dissolved. In statement, the group reflected on "the brightest sparks of the insurrectionary movement" and honored their Palestinian comrades from the PFLP who lost their lives in the autumn of 1977 during an action of international solidarity attempting to liberate political prisoners.

In Western Europe, people who showed solidarity with the Palestinian people were condemned as anti-semites from the very beginning, especially in Germany, with its history of Nazi crimes. During the summer of 1988, the squats on Hafenstraße in Hamburg showed their solidarity with Palestine, painting on one of the occupied houses (thus risking its eviction) the slogan, "Boycott Israel! Boycott Israeli products, Israeli kibbutzim, Israeli beaches. The Palestinian people will be free! Revolution until victory." It was later claimed that the RAF lived on Hafenstraße while underground, which is why the Verden and Karlruhe prosecutors' continue still today to express their intense hatred originates towards this symbol of internationalist resistance.

Letter from Daniela Klette to the Rosa Luxemburg Congress

Dear attendees of the Rosa Luxemburg Conference –

Dear comrades,

I greet you today from the prison in Vechta. Almost a year ago, after decades of living underground, I was arrested. Before me lie several years of trials, in which I am accused of participating in armed expropriations. Additionally, the judiciary is pursuing another trial against me, in which I am to be accused of participating in urban guerrilla actions against capitalism and imperialism.

I was 17 when the Vietnamese liberation struggle defeated U.S.-led imperialism. That incredible victory was achieved with global solidarity – despite napalm, despite the massive military machine that stood against the liberation movement, and despite the massacres of the Vietnamese population committed by the U.S. military with the assistance and complicity of the West, especially Germany.

I was 16 when I learned of the murder of a man in custody, who was on hunger strike against the torture of isolation detention. This was Holger Meins, who had taken a stand against the system and was killed in prison through deliberate malnutrition and the denial of medical care during state-ordered force feeding.

It was a time of attempts at liberation and anti-colonial struggles in many countries: for example, the Black Panthers against racist oppression and for revolution in the U.S., the fight against apartheid in South Africa, or the FSLN in Nicaragua against the dictatorship there. I began to understand what humanity can expect from capitalism and imperialism. Yes, I saw myself as part of the global movements fighting for liberation from exploitation and oppression, against capitalism and patriarchy, and against war and militarism.

The legal system is now deliberating as to my guilt in a legal sense. For me, it is not a question of guilt but of what has mobilized and continues to mobilize millions of people: How do we overcome the global conditions that produce war, displacement, exploitation, patriarchal and racist oppression, poverty, and total ecological destruction?

The powerful are preparing for the great war to preserve their power. Society is marked by growing poverty, militarization, and a drift to the right. Capitalism is heading toward ecological disaster. The state of the world today makes it unmistakably clear that the questions about how to overcome these conditions were justified and remain necessary. These questions are for all of us, and we can only answer them collectively and through large-scale movements. I wish I could be with you to work on these questions together. But repression and the state's determination to condemn the forms and movements against capitalism, imperialism, and patriarchy. And it is also the history of attempts to achieve emancipation and liberation that have existed for centuries. It lives on in the enduring dreams of a just world, where people live together with respect and in harmony with all other living beings and nature, and in today's attempts to achieve this.

The Federal Prosecutor's Office is already preparing for the next trial against me. I am to be charged with:

1) an attempted militant attack in the early 1990s against what was then probably the most powerful bank in Western Europe

2) the destruction of a newly constructed prison in Weiterstadt by the Red Army Faction (RAF) in 1993

3) an armed anti-war action by the RAF against the Iraq War in 1991.

In the two wars waged by the US against Iraq since 1991, and as a result of the subsequent sanctions, many thousands of children were killed. Years later, when asked about this, former US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright replied that these wars were nevertheless justified. No one responsible for the many thousands of people killed, the devastated country, the subsequent chain of Western wars in the Middle East culminating in the current genocide in Gaza, or the millions of deaths caused by armed violence and sanctions, spent even a single day of their life in prison.

Against wars that serve only the profit of the few, against the power of capital, and against a prison system designed to discipline, break, and imprison the poor, the rebellious, migrants in immigration detention, dissidents, and political prisoners. Everything they rebelled against exists today more fiercely than ever before. Just look at how rapidly the assessments from a year ago regarding militarization and the necessary transformation of metropolitan societies at all levels have come true. This militarization also means the suppression and marginalization of all social concerns and ecological urgency from public discourse. Instead, fear is to be generated – fear of those seeking help, whether refugees or poor people, who are supposedly overwhelming the social systems and are often portrayed as criminals or at least parasites; fear of losing one's right to exist if corporate profits fail to increase; fear of Russia, supposedly thirsting for war, and the growing power of China.

This is intended to pave the way for people to accept everything, or, if they don't, to be suppressed with increasing repression. In Germany, the Palestine solidarity movement, the anti-capitalist anti-war movement, and parts of the anti-fascist movement are currently particularly affected by this. Even those who show solidarity with political prisoners are targeted by state repression.

The problems arising from the crisis of the Western capitalist system are to be shifted onto the lower strata of society through wage cuts, austerity measures, and reductions in social, healthcare, and welfare services—despite the certainty that this will lead to the spread of poverty, disease, and despair.

Letter from Daniela Klette to the Rosa Luxemburg Congress

Dear Comrades!

A year ago, Rolf Becker conveyed my greeting at the 30th International Rosa Luxemburg Conference. Many people subsequently told me enthusiastically how expressive he was, and I was very pleased that it was in such good hands with him. As I sit here writing this, I heard the news that Rolf Becker has died. Such a great loss – a special person, comrade. Whose life was always intertwined with resistance against the prevailing conditions. He is missed today, yet will remain present. My deepest sympathy goes out to those who lived close to him, his friends, comrades, and his family.

I was arrested in February 2024 after three decades of living underground in solidarity. Now, I am in my second year as a prisoner in Vechta. A verdict in the first trial is expected against me in a few months. There is no end in sight to my imprisonment. On 49 days in 2025, I was transported, handcuffed and shackled, by a large police force to the former riding hall, which had been specially converted for this trial at a cost of 3.6 million euros. This location, also besieged by a police presence, was chosen in such a way that it is a major challenge for trial observers to even reach it. An undoubtedly chilling scenario designed to demonstrate my alleged "danger to the public," a fiction fabricated by state authorities and the mainstream media. It is constantly emphasized that this is a perfectly normal procedure, a claim already refuted by this scenario. It is further refuted by the prosecution's relentless efforts, against all better judgment, to fabricate our dangerousness and alleged propensity for violence and murder in the context of robbery.

For instance, when a witness, tragically retraumatized by the robbery, emphasizes during the trial the polite and reserved demeanor of those she encountered during one of the robberies, which had a calming effect on her at the time, this is not what the prosecution wants to hear. Nor is it what they want to hear that this calming behavior is corroborated by further testimony. No wonder, since their goal is to further legitimize the manhunt against Burkhard (Garweg, jW) and Volker (Staub, jW) and to secure the harshest possible sentence and the longest possible prison term for me. In doing so, they are following the long-standing tradition of the German justice system – those who do not submit, who do not betray, and who cannot be paraded as broken individuals are punished by state power.

This attack I am facing stems not only from the acts I am accused of, but it is also directed against the history of fundamental resistance in the Federal Republic of Germany, with which my life is intertwined. This history is part of the broader history of resistance, in which, over decades, people worldwide have risen up in diverse history of fundamental opposition prevent such a thing.

No one who is imprisoned as part of the liberatory and revolutionary left is incarcerated simply because of their alleged or actual deeds. We are all imprisoned due to the state's intent to delegitimize the history of revolutionary struggles and to deter future struggles by condemning us to years of suffering in prison. This applies to me as much as it does to Mumia Abu-Jamal and Leonard Peltier in the U.S., the imprisoned anarchists in Greece – Marianna, Dimitri, Nikos, Dimitra – and many other political prisoners worldwide.

In this sense, the trial against me is a trial against an emancipatory, radical left, and anti-capitalist opposition.

I would greatly appreciate it if those who are able would attend my trial, which will begin soon – to show that this is not just a trial against me, but on another level, is a trial against everyone who engages with the question of overcoming capitalism. I would deeply appreciate any solidarity!

I wish you much success and, yes, I also hope you have much joy at this year's Rosa Luxemburg Conference!

With solidarity, a fighting spirit, and warm regards to you all,

Daniela Klette

January 2025

"The Possibility of a Historic Moment is Now":
A Call for Solidarity with Daniela Klette from Burkard Garweg

"The Possibility of a Historic Moment is Now": On the history of the RAF and the question of the reconstruction of an anti-capitalist, social revolutionary, anti-patriarchal and internationalist movement in the present day.

In her text in »nd.Die Woche« of January 18, 2025, Caroline Braunmühl presents an alternative position to the bourgeois attitude that attempts to depoliticize the history of militant and armed resistance by reducing its content to violence and negating a political conflict.

In my statement of December 2024, it was also important to me to present resistance to capitalism in the context of the relations of violence – exploitation, the rule of man over man, nationalism, militarism and war – and thus to conduct the debate according to historical reality and to counter the historiography of the rulers and their attempts at manipulation.

The aim of bourgeois historiography is to delegitimize and criminalize anti-capitalist resistance and its history. Its elites have a fundamental interest in maintaining the conditions of exploitation and oppression and in being able to continue to make profits. This is what the proclamation from the ranks of its elites in the 1990s, which has gone down in history, stands for: "there is no alternative."

Caroline Braunmühl associates the RAF and other militant groups, such as the Rote Zora, with radical resistance against the "violence of socially dominant groups and individuals against socially subordinates – such as class justice, patriarchal violence or transnational relationships of exploitation, oppression and war, from which the economic elites in the Federal Republic of Germany have profited and continue to profit today." She identifies the justification for militant resistance against violent relations and at the same time denies the legitimacy of targeted assassinations by the RAF in its history.

She criticizes my statement from a feminist perspective and for lacking criticism of the RAF.

I agree with her that a reflective picture of the history of the struggles with the ability to see their weaknesses is necessary. The main thing is to be able to draw conclusions for the struggles of the future.

The world of the dominant capitalist system is moving at an increasing pace towards social and global erosion: war, poverty, displacement and the destruction of the planet's ecological basis for life. The bourgeois state – and this affects the entire and existential today.

The emancipatory left today inevitably faces the question of whether it wants to save bourgeois democracy with the persistence of the relations of violence inherent in it – although the fascist option and authoritarianism are based on bourgeois democracy and the one arises from the other – or instead deal with its transformation into a domination-free and anti-capitalist future.

Bourgeois anti-fascism as a form of left-liberal politics that focuses on right-wing extremist parties, fights symptoms, negates the systemic cause and intends to save bourgeois democracy will not be able to stop the run into further authoritarianism, fascism, war and climate destruction and therefore leads to nothing. System transformation into an anti-capitalist age would be the only option that could lead to the goal.

Pure doctrines are a thing of the past. For the future of revolutionary transformation, we need the insights of the history of emancipatory movements: feminism, anarchism, communism, anti-racism, the movements of people of color, left-wing queer communities, communities of people with disabilities and their movements for self-determination, social revolutionary and subcultural movements, left-wing migrant communities, the migrant history of resistance, the failure of real socialism and many more.

Rosa Luxemburg's words in the face of the great crisis of capitalism in 1918 are still valid today – and stand for the possibility of building a liberated society instead of domination, patriarchy, fascism, war, nationalism, exploitation and destruction:

Socialism or barbarism!
The circle closes.
The possibility of a historic moment could come and is now.

As long as we live in a system that is based on violence and locks up people who resist it in prison, diverse resistance is justified and necessary.

The special prison conditions and the imprisonment of Daniela Klette – like that of all prisoners in the history of emancipation struggles worldwide – are an expression of the violent relations of capitalist realities.

This applies not only to prisoners, but to all of humanity: we can only be free if everyone is free.

Freedom for Daniela!
smash the system

Burkhard Garweg

March 2025

existential.

The legacy of revolutionary history is the struggle for liberation today and in the future until all domination is overcome and all are free.

Today

Today we are in the midst of another epochal turning point. The crisis of eroding capitalism has opened a window of opportunity in which new dimensions of imperialism, up to the dimensions of World War III, are realistic. It is the age of authoritarianism, progressive impoverishment, nationalism, comprehensive militarization and ecological destruction of the planet, of flight and expulsion.

Today's epochal break is a threatening age. However, the erosion of conditions could also present the possibility and opportunity for system transformation and liberation from capitalism.

Emancipation and revolution are only possible in the coexistence of different struggles and in the "recognition of interconnectedness", as Caroline Braunmühl wrote – and of the existence of privileges and power imbalances in all areas of humanity. This too is an important and decisive prerequisite for transformative processes. I agree with this certainty without reservation.

An emancipatory revolution begins with our own awareness and then leads to change within us.

Coming together in recognition of different axes of power and privilege and in the certainty of the need for processes of our own change – in struggles against exploitation, oppression and war in capitalism – would be a process of revolutionary transformation. This would be, in a sense, looking in the mirror and then at society.

There we see exploitation, poverty and a top and a bottom. There we see patriarchy and its relations of violence; racism as an instrument of domination and its social independence; militarism and war and the few who profit from it and the many who flee from it. There we see weapons that are produced, the class that profits from it and the many they kill. We see the protest against it and the daily repression of the protest. We see structural police violence and class justice. We see the ecological destruction of the planet for the profit of the few and the masses who have to flee because of it. These are spaces in which we can come together today in all our diversity and in the awareness of a complex and multi-layered power structure in the process of transformation. They could be the spaces of the uprising of tomorrow.

The end of violent relations, a peaceful world, a world beyond ecological destruction, freedom from patriarchy, exploitation, domination and nation will not exist under capitalism. This is the factual prerequisite that cannot be changed and is evident.

The questions of revolutionary transformation instead of barbarism are current

capitalist center of Europe and the USA – is increasingly using right-wing and authoritarian means. It uses the construction of a "national community" to differentiate itself from migrants, Muslims, refugees and the poor. It uses racism, nationalism and rapid militarization both internally and externally. This has repercussions – some of which are also intended – on bourgeois society.

This is becoming radicalized by the deeply rooted racist, patriarchal and social forms of differentiation, exclusion and oppression within society. The world is unmistakably moving towards an infernal tipping point of social, ecological and military erosion.

Capitalism offers no solution to this. It would also be a contradiction in terms. The elites' solutions to the crisis are now authoritarianism, fascism, war and the process of unifying bourgeois and fascist politics. This is nothing other than a journey into the possible abyss with clear parallels to the historical crises that culminated in the world wars of 1914 and 1939 – albeit with an extremely increased global destructive potential in modern times.

Anyone who wants to prevent this should focus less on the hopeless rescue of bourgeois democracy as a facet of capitalism and the associated retention of the fundamental relations of violence, but rather on social revolutionary alternatives that can only be achieved as a result of social revolutionary and emancipatory struggles.

Existential questions arise: In which steps, initiatives and processes can the reconstruction of an anti-capitalist, social revolutionary and internationalist left be achieved?

But also: What do we take with us into the future from the struggles and concepts of history, from the attempts to overcome the thoroughly violent capitalism and imperialism? How do we as revolutionary leftists discuss and write history from below and appropriate it for the struggles of today and tomorrow and against the propagandistic, depoliticizing and criminalizing historiography from above?

I see in the history of the RAF courage and determination to dare something, to take risks and the unconditionality and seriousness and the surrender of one's own privileges that are also needed to achieve the transformation of the misery of domination and oppression – including the overturning of power imbalances within society.

How much I was moved as a young person by their determination and unconditionality and the way they put themselves aside in deep and true solidarity with the poor and colonized people of this world, with the exploited in the countries of the starving Tricontinent and the insurgents there. How much I was moved – still wet behind the ears and without much knowledge and above all out of empathy with those who had nothing or almost nothing – by the militant internationalism they stood for. There were times when I read the texts of Ernesto Cardenal or later the last texts of Ulrike, which I was not yet able to fully understand.

I heard about Nelson Mandela and Steve Biko, one of whom was a political prisoner in South Africa for decades, and the other an insurgent against South Africa's apartheid system who was tortured and murdered by the South African police. I was outraged by this unspeakable, racist violence, including state violence, but also moved by the resistance of so many and that of the ANC. At the same time, however, I also learned that I myself lived in a country whose elite profited from this system of violence known as apartheid, and was deeply connected to the racist regime in South Africa, its military and its police. It was a regime made up of predominantly South African, German or US capital, of the local government, military and police, of the self-proclaimed elite of white colonialists, who treated people like slaves, exploited them, killed them and declared them second or third class citizens because they were black. I perceived it – and it also shaped my life – this oppressive and violent reality of this colonial and state crime, this "normality" of the world of capitalism. The perpetrators and accomplices of this unspeakable racism, also committed by the state, and these crimes of colonialism sat in their headquarters in Pretoria or Johannesburg. They sat in Frankfurt, Stuttgart, Munich or Bonn on the boards of banks and corporations, in the German government or in the barracks of the Western world, especially the German, Israeli or US military.

For me, it was the RAF that showed solidarity in the struggle with the poor and the revolutionaries in Nicaragua, El Salvador and South Africa, those attempts at revolution that had moved me since my early youth. I began to realise that it was a shared resistance – that in the metropolis and that in the Tricontinent. And that was what the RAF meant.

History is also the history of mistakes, defeats and moments of sadness. For me, the history of the RAF is also a history of strategic and tactical errors.

In the history of the RAF, there are also moments that were not shaped by the moral compass of the revolution.

Nobody has to find the whole story correct today. For me, this does not call into question the fundamental legitimacy of the contribution of various attempts at resistance over the centuries – including that of the RAF – to liberation from the violent conditions.

The RAF emerged from the resistance of the (19)68 movement. The 68 movement reconstructed the anti-capitalist resistance that had been crushed by the Nazis in Germany. It brought the personal continuities of the elite into the consciousness of society. It is the miserable reality of the Federal Republic of Germany that it was built up by the old Nazis. They made careers as converted democrats in all state institutions and on the boards of banks and corporations – under the umbrella of the USA. The Nazi elite became the elite of West German democracy overnight.

It was a rebellion against the reactionary stuffiness of the West German

prison, the guerrillas found their way to propaganda of action, that idea of revolutionary practice from the history of the anarchist movement. In this way, their return to acting within the social context was appropriately populist in the best sense. A moment that also guided the Red Brigades in Italy in their early days up to 1974 – despite completely different circumstances and incomparable strength.

Ultimately, the left, the RAF and the social conditions in the 1990s were not ready for an armed struggle for a social revolutionary transformation.

The West German left and what was left of it was preoccupied with the emerging nationalism and racism and its fascist and widespread violence.

They, the radical left, had neither the strength nor the foresight to find a social revolutionary response to the surprising incorporation of the GDR. The up to 50,000 people who took part in individual demonstrations in the defunct GDR at the time of the fall of the Berlin Wall against the integration into capitalism and in the dwindling hope of a "third – socialist and emancipatory – way", beyond the great mistakes of repressive and rigid real socialism and beyond capitalism, remained more or less alone. In the years that followed, no relevant, social revolutionary left was formed, and none that could have posed a political threat to the new German imperialism that had begun to kill during the war in Yugoslavia.

The RAF had already become history and any idea of a repeat is absurd.

The time in the 1990s was not ripe for new forms of militant struggle as an arm and option of large emancipatory movements that no longer existed and do not yet exist.

After the upheavals and divisions among the RAF prisoners at the time and the RAF itself – and after the RAF declared its end in 1998 – I felt an inner distance from this story.

Today I see in the history of the RAF the moment of justified resistance and its moments in history.

In these 28 years of history, I see those who gave everything for the goal of a better and fairer world. I see those who had to bear the decades of misery of prison on their shoulders or those who died in this fight for liberation from the violent conditions of the capitalist system.

I also see in the history of the RAF its strategic and tactical mistakes.

I see its low points, with which it robbed itself of legitimacy at times and which remain as a burden of history.

Probably every revolution or its attempts, probably every story of struggle between domination and liberation throughout the centuries has had its ambivalences.

The collective appropriation of revolutionary history and its reflection lays the trail into the future of the struggles of human emancipation and liberation as well as one's own development and change within it.

The RAF is history, the question of resistance and transformation remains and is

At this point it should be said that the violence of the Federal Republic of Germany in the fight against insurgency, which from a realistic point of view can only be seen as state terrorism with partly fascistoid forms, led to moments of legitimate self-defense in the history of the RAF.

There were undoubtedly moments of weakness in the RAF's struggle and political decisions that were wrong. There were also moments when the moral compass of the revolution did not determine the historical moment. Every moment of this is one too many and remains as a burden on history.

Moments of collective memory of the revolutionary left are also linked to the numerous militants of the RAF and the resistance who did not survive the fight for a world free from the rule of man over man and state terrorism, either in prison or outside.

1993

The year in which Wolfgang Grams was executed by the police while lying incapacitated on the tracks in Bad Kleinen. For Birgit Hogefeld, long years of life in prison began.

Before that, the RAF blew up the Weiterstadt prison. This was the end of the RAF's armed politics and the beginning of another possible perspective of militant politics.

The destruction of the prison had opened up a social relationship in which prison as a means of domination affects all those who are affected by the repression and misery of prison out of need and necessity or because of their awareness of it. They are the poor; they are those who do not have the money for tickets; they are those who sink into drugs so that they no longer have to feel the misery of the violent conditions; they are the recalcitrant; they are those in deportation detention, they are those who defend themselves and those who rebel against domination and violent conditions – and who end up in prison for it.

The bombing of the Weiterstadt prison will go down in history as a political direct hit. It touched the hearts of many. And that is how it should be.

The RAF of the 1990s – with all its weaknesses, its sometimes lack of foresight and the weakness of its theoretical foundations, and despite the fact that in moments of its search it was more "clumsy" than sharp-witted and analytical, but what distinguished it was courageous enough to move forward in a questioning and searching manner, and despite the fact that it did not bury "assassination politics" until 1992: Under the changed conditions of that decade, it had tried to find its way back to the social revolutionary, class-fighting and internationalist principles that the RAF had known in its early days.

With the actions against the US embassy and the blowing up of the Weiterstadt

democracy shaped by National Socialism and a questioning of the existing capitalist order, which was socially reactionary and repressive and structurally based on exploitation and militarization.

After the murder of the anti-rearmament demonstrator Philipp Müller by the police and after the ban on the KPD in 1956, police violence, professional bans and emergency laws were the state's response at the end of the 1960s to the movement of students and apprentices, youth, the sub-proletariat and other sections of the population.

It was the time of the Vietnam War, the merciless brutality of the US military machine, which tried to wipe out the Vietnamese attempt at revolution and went down in history with the massacres of the Vietnamese population and the use of the chemical warfare agent napalm. Huge movements of solidarity against the imperialist war and for the right to liberation by the Vietnamese armed and revolutionary movement arose around the world. "Bring the war home" – a slogan of the US anti-war movement. The 1968 movement and the RAF did exactly that and brought the worldwide resistance against the Vietnam War into German society. With the immense resistance against the Western world's war of terror, the possibility of liberation had entered the consciousness of humanity worldwide and was on the table at the time. Revolutionary, anti-colonial and anti-racist struggles developed worldwide. Capitalism and imperialism were up for debate. Armed struggle of the Gauche Proletarienne in France, the Red Brigades in Italy, armed struggle in Spain, Northern Ireland, England, the Basque Country, Greece, Japan, Palestine, the Black Panthers and the Weather Underground in the USA, the Tupamaros in Uruguay, the urban guerrillas in Mexico and Brazil or the anti-fascist uprising of the Carnation Revolution in Portugal.

It was the time of anti-colonial struggles in the South, in Mozambique, Algeria and many other places of anti-colonial liberation against the crimes of the West there.

The "racial segregation" of apartheid in South Africa, the state and social racism in the USA, the murder of a million people during the crushing of the Communist Party in Indonesia by US military forces or the CIA-led military coup against the government of Salvador Allende in Chile are examples of Western self-evident truths and brutalities that humanity should accept.

This violence of Western capitalism and imperialism generated revolutionary counter-violence around the world, such as the resistance of the ANC and the Black Panthers. It showed millions of people around the world that capitalism is built on the foundation of violence.

In Paris, a million people took to the streets, on strike and on the barricades – large parts of the population, students and proletarians together.

Berlin, Turin, Paris, New York: Revolution no longer seemed unthinkable. Things were shaking tremendously in the Western world.

In Germany, the state attempted to crush the insurgent movement with harsh repression, emergency laws, professional bans, the imprisonment of thousands and police violence. The first shot came from the weapon of the German state: the police murdered Benno Ohnesorg on June 2, 1967.

The social democratic version of the crackdown consisted of carrot and stick, of repression and the offer of integration, which was intended to bring about the abandonment of any resistance to capitalism and imperialism in the march through the institutions – and continues to this day.

The situation in the world at that time, this age of uprisings and imperialism, whose state terror is visualized in the image of the Vietnamese girl fleeing from the bombs of the West, the social situation in the post-Nazi Federal Republic of Germany, the harsh and systematic state repression against the awakening, the elite of the Federal Republic of Germany riddled with Nazi perpetrators, the strikes – including wild ones, those marked by migrants – at the end of the 1960s and beginning of the 1970s, the virulence of ideas of the revolutionary transformation of the status quo in all parts of society and the worldwide uprisings against imperialism, state racism and colonialism as well as the emergence of urban guerrilla groups in many countries, including the metropolises – allow, in my view, only one conclusion: the emergence of the various armed fighting groups in the Federal Republic of Germany, this risk, this revolutionary experiment was completely justified and had to be attempted. Not trying would have been a failure in revolutionary history. A historic moment was possible.

1972

The "Urban Guerrilla Concept" and other RAF texts of this period were also an attempt to halt the decline of the movement, which had been plagued by repression and integration, and to bring it into the perspective of liberation.

The RAF's actions were directed against the imperialist war, against the means of power through repression and the aggressive and violent manipulation of society by the Springer press and other media. In all attacks, they were a link to the (19)68 movement.

By attacking the US Army headquarters and destroying the computer there, which was essential for the state terrorist bombing, the RAF clearly sided with the oppressed and those trying to free themselves, and thus played a part in defeating the cruel Western imperialism that was raging in Vietnam as part of the worldwide resistance. The destruction of the US military computer in Heidelberg meant that the bombing and the mass killing of people that went with it had to be stopped for several days. In Vietnam, the massacred population appreciated this.

In 1972, the RAF had a social revolutionary and anti-imperialist concept that was

since 1977, which should have inevitably led to a break with it as a political decision and marked a moment of political weakness and lack of foresight on the part of the RAF at that time.

Both delegitimized the attack on the Treuhand boss. So what had to happen happened: it left society and the remaining left as spectators on the sidelines. The attack's severity ran counter to the growing together of the urban guerrillas and the remaining left. The same applies to the obvious attempt to reach out to others who were battered, degraded or downgraded by great uncertainty and social upheaval in the new Germany. Many people noticed this attempt by the RAF, and not just leftists, but also on a broader social level – especially that of the downgraded and insecure, proletarian sections of the population of the defunct GDR. But nothing came of it. Despite its unmistakably social revolutionary orientation and purpose, an assassination attempt could not contribute to a new beginning.

Individual assassinations in the long history of revolutions and uprisings over the centuries can only be assessed in a differentiated and historical context. In fact, history can only be discussed in a differentiated and political manner. On the other hand, an "assassination policy" – there is no way around calling it that in the form of practice that has been elevated to dogma (and the RAF never called it that, but the term sums up the practice from 1977 to 1990) – and this term already tells of its political weakness – could not achieve what revolutionary politics and practice in the metropolis are all about. "Assassination policy" in its structural application is an expression of militaristic independence and subjectivist consciousness. "Assassination policy" negates the structural interchangeability of individual decision-makers in bourgeois democracy, which inevitably leads to a legitimacy deficit. "Assassination policy" simply has too little effect on society's consciousness in the construction of revolutionary counter-power in the metropolis.

"Assassination politics" reaches only a few people and leaves those it wants to reach as spectators on the sidelines.

A primary goal of revolutionary strategy should surely be to reach the consciousness of the addressees in the social context – those who are to be reached.

The RAF has been losing this since 1977 and could not be eliminated with the necessary consequence even at the beginning of the 1990s. Here the form of the assassination was at odds with the goal and countered the proclaimed political realignment in the early 1990s.

Historically, there are of course assassinations as a form of revolutionary self-defense and counter-violence that are clear and whose legitimacy cannot be denied from a revolutionary perspective: for example, the assassination attempt against the former boss of Schleyer and SS mass murderer Heydrich, the attempt by Georg Elser to kill Hitler, or the assassination attempt in the anti-fascist struggle in Spain on Carrero Blanco – the successor and deputy of the Spanish fascist and dictator Franco.

acted outside of social relations, i.e. subjectivistically, despite the fact that it was still influenced by the 1980s. A non-fatal assassination attempt in the context of the hunger strike of Spanish revolutionary prisoners during the collapse of the Soviet Union and the takeover of the GDR by the FRG, i.e. the triumph of capitalism with its serious social upheavals in Germany and Eastern Europe, is absurd in retrospect. Not that solidarity with the Spanish prisoners would not have been a good thing – but an assassination attempt in this context during the fundamental changes in the world and the social and political effects of this in Germany was completely politically disorientating. A true irony of history.

1991

The action against the US embassy in the war against the people of Iraq, the first violent expression of the new world order in which only the capitalist centres would have power, a war that would lead to millions of deaths as a result of military force and sanctions, was a first departure from the "assassination policy" of the 1980s. It was the first political/military non-lethal action, the declared aim of which was not to endanger others, since the action against the Springer group in 1972, which only resulted in accidental injuries on the part of the RAF. This action in 1972 was an attempt to reach out to a dying movement of the 1968 generation, which was denounced by the constant lies of the Springer press.

The action against the US embassy in 1991 was also declared to be the first clear approach to left-wing movements since the early 1970s and an attempt to connect with them – even without the expectation that they should join the guerrillas with militancy. In fact, the false concept of avant-garde was off the table and obsolete in the proclaimed process of searching.

With the action against Rohwedder, the RAF returned, in contradiction, to the "politics of assassination." In political terms, in contrast to the 1980s, it acted in a clear relationship to society. The action explained itself in terms of social conditions: the "incorporation" of the GDR by capitalism and the social upheavals that this brought about. It was essentially class-fighting and socially revolutionary. It had an obvious and declared addressee: the workers and masses affected by the upheavals and the realignment of capitalism, who were exposed to the new conditions of capitalism. The decision to attack the Treuhandanstalt as a front institution of West German capital in this process was self-explanatory and politically coherent as an attack on the institution, regardless of the form.

At the same time, the RAF was in the process of searching for a new conception and a path to an updated strategy and therefore did not yet know a possible future of a "political-military" conception.

Furthermore, the RAF's "assassination policy" had been thoroughly discredited

in a social context and proclaimed the primacy of practice. How sympathetic and right as a part of the class struggle was the serious and credible reference of Andreas Baader, Gudrun Ensslin, Jan Raspe, Holger Meins and Ulrike Meinhof and all the others to the fringes of society, the sub-proletariat, the children in care homes, those who had become mentally ill in the system or to the proletarian women of the Märkisches Viertel – that proletarian and poor part of Berlin. The militants of the RAF came from all classes and from the history of different political ideas of this time of awakening: anarchism, communism, feminism, social revolutionaries and anti-imperialists. That is what I assume. How open the RAF was.

The RAF had a base in the insurgent movement that was in decline. Its practice was an attempt to take this movement into the revolutionary struggle against the decline. It was in line with social reality and the worldwide, revolutionary and anti-colonial awakening.

The RAF in its inception – just like 2 June and later the Revolutionary Cells and the Rote Zora – was, in its relationship to state violence and to the fundamental power relations in capitalism, legitimate revolutionary counter-violence and a legitimate attempt at liberation. All of the actions in its early days, which ended with the arrests of the militants of the time in 1972 and '73, are a very clear expression of this and convey exactly that.

In a survey conducted at the time, one in five German citizens said they would be willing to protect a member of the RAF from arrest.

The time was ripe for this revolutionary attempt and it was part of worldwide revolutionary attempts. The emergence of the urban guerrilla groups RAF and 2 June at that time was based on historical conditions.

Given the circumstances, an attempt had to be made to reconstruct the fundamental resistance and the option of liberation that the Nazi state had once destroyed with the extermination of the workers' movement and whose Nazi elites now opposed it again as converted, flawless democrats.

Looking back on this history of resistance and this contribution to the liberation attempt, how important this early period of the RAF is to me and how it helped to shape my relationship with it. I would not be able to understand the history of the RAF in its entirety – neither in its merits nor in its lows – without being aware of this time and the legitimacy of its creation. That time – I was just born at the beginning of it – seems distant, but the content of their attempt, even if it is history, is close to me.

After the arrests in 1972/73, the RAF only existed as prisoners.

"Dare to be more democratic," as Willy Brandt said in 1972, had no reality in the execution of Tommy Weisbecker, Georg von Rauch, Petra Schelm or of bystanders during the manhunt, such as Ian McLeod – shot through a closed door – or the killing

of the unarmed apprentice Richard Epple by the police.

In the prisons, it was the Federal Prosecutor's Office, the Ministry of Justice and the government – in other words, the state – that decided on war against the imprisoned RAF and bore responsibility for it: solitary confinement for all political prisoners, daily cell raids, physical abuse by the rolling squads in the prisons, the dead wing in Cologne-Ossendorf, in which Ulrike Meinhof and Astrid Proll were sealed off from all sensory perceptions, or the research into isolation as a method of subjugating people in prison at the University of Hamburg.

The state's plan to forcibly open Ulrike Meinhof's skull in order to examine her brain and "prove" that her resistance was due to "brain damage" was only prevented due to public protest. The factual parallels to the research of the Nazi perpetrator Josef Mengele, who carried out forced examinations on living people in the German extermination camps during the Nazi regime and killed or mutilated them in the process, are obvious. These are traces of this period and of the state's attempt – in its excesses one could also call fascist – to annihilate or subjugate those who had questioned the existing order in a revolutionary way and were at the mercy of the system as prisoners.

The death of Holger Meins in 1974 during a hunger strike against the torture of solitary confinement through force-feeding, the dosage of which was designed to lead to his death, and the denial of medical help, was a state murder. They knew and wanted him to die as a result of their measures. In the war against prisoners and in the attempt to subjugate or destroy them, the elite clearly broke with the basic law of bourgeois democracy that they proclaimed: "Human dignity is inviolable" and openly showed the violence inherent in the bourgeois state.

The former officers of the Wehrmacht of the Nazi state: Schmidt, Buback, Herold and others, were the ones who ordered this extreme form of state violence and were responsible for it.

Even much later in the next decade of the (19)80s, as a young person I was moved by the violent and state-terrorist reality of that time and helped me to understand that the foundation of the bourgeois state in capitalism is based on violence, terror, war and exploitation.

A little later, in the 1980s – I remember being very moved by it myself – I once told my mother about the torture of prisoners in solitary confinement. She was visibly moved. Unbeknownst to her, I had broken the windows of some banks with others to support the prisoners on hunger strike. Many years later, I would hear that my father and mother had themselves moved in solidarity with the prisoners and had begun to support the Kurdish liberation struggle as part of their lives.

Social and societal empathy is something they gave me in life. It was also reflected in their decisions, which led them to become involved in the history of resistance in solidarity and, despite the repression of German or Turkish "security forces", were

here: an action of this magnitude without an explainable strategy, but as the initiation of a process of search and redefinition, has a legitimacy deficit from the outset.

At the same time, however, an action against Deutsche Bank at that time represented a return to a policy that was objectively determined by a social relationship. Herrhausen was the man who set the course for German capital's reunification, for Germany's rise to become one of the world's leading economic powers, and represented the emerging new German imperialism after the fall of the Soviet Union like no other on the side of German capitalism. In political terms, addressing and/or attacking the Deutsche Bank group at that time – regardless of its form – was objectively the possibility of a social revolutionary and anti-imperialist perspective and marked a departure from subjectivism – that is, acting outside of the social relationship.

1990

The RAF's practice in the 1990s was clearly an unconditional adherence to fundamental opposition in the form of the RAF in the face of Germany's rise to the "Fourth Reich", as many on the left feared at the time, and the rise of German capitalism. Their will to change something that had long since become wrong was unmistakable. Their courage to define themselves as seekers and not as responders was clear.

However, it was also marked by its obvious theoretical weakness. In this respect, it was clearly a child of the 1980s. The early RAF group and the comrades of the 1970s still drew on the wealth of profound and diverse, worldwide discussions of the 1968 era and the effort to collectively acquire theoretical knowledge. In the 1980s, the RAF militants then drew on the wealth of May 1982 and remained stuck in it. The 1980s were years of practice rather than theory, even in the legal sub-movements.

In the 1980s, at the historical moment of epochal change, I myself was part of the squatter movement and a resident of Hamburg's Hafenstrasse – what a unique, special and formative time in my life, I thought of it for a long time with nostalgia and affection – and was more driven by a youthful, emotional and immature radicalism and determination than by profound conceptual debates or the theoretical acquisition of knowledge.

I was not yet aware of the importance of the wealth of knowledge of my fellow residents on Hafenstrasse at the time, some of whom had already brought experience from the 1970s, and some of whom were anarchists, social revolutionaries or former prisoners of June 2nd and the Red Army Faction, nor of the possibility of drawing on it and taking it with me into life.

The action against the then Secretary of State for the Interior, Neusel, showed how the RAF, despite the recognition in their statement that something had to change, still

a discussion with other social groups.

The end of the international order of the 1980s, which was the prerequisite for the RAF's determination in May 1982: The dissolution of the real socialist bloc and the decline of the remaining liberation movements dissolved the RAF's determination framework.

After the hunger strike, the political changes at various levels, including international ones, and the invalidity of the guerrilla strategy of May 1982, the state executive was sure that the RAF would not return to this practice.

The state reacted to the prisoners' political openness and their attempt to put an end to extermination imprisonment, and despite the broad solidarity for their demands from many people across all sectors of society, as it had done for 18 years: it maintained the extermination regime in the form of isolation torture.

In retrospect, the epochal turning point in 1989 would have been a historically imperative moment – as it was after 1977 – to review the continued existence of the RAF, to conduct an appropriate investigation and class analysis and to decide whether the project should be transformed or terminated.

At that moment, the RAF did not have the political strength to fully grasp the dimension of this historical moment in relation to its own situation. However, it was determined not to give up in the face of the gloom of the times, which loomed large with the prospect of German capital now gaining what it had not achieved under National Socialist rule: becoming one of the world powers behind the USA, the hegemonic power in Europe and an active actor in imperialist wars.

In retrospect, it is unrealistic that the RAF would have simply carried on in the face of the epochal turning point of 1989 if, at the same time, an end to the hostage-taking of the prisoners, which was designed to destroy them, could have been enforced and thus the discussion about updating the transformative strategies of the left and the old fundamental opposition inside and outside would have been possible.

In this respect, the state bears its share of responsibility for the killing of the head of Deutsche Bank and the head of the Treuhand by the RAF. The action against Herrhausen was also clearly a response to the persistence of the state's desire to destroy the prisoners. The RAF was objectively at a historical point at which it could only have disbanded or come back as a new project with a new strategy – if at all, given the real state of society and that of the remaining left.

1989

The RAF's action against Herrhausen was a contradiction in terms: the RAF was clearly reacting in the context of the state terrorist violence of immense proportions that had existed since 1970. At the same time, it was no longer acting within an inadequate strategy, but without a strategy. There is, of course, a visible contradiction

prepared to leave the privilege of their own safety behind at times.

1975, Stockholm

After the death of Holger Meins, whose death also demonstrated that the German state was once again prepared to liquidate prisoners 29 years after the end of Nazi fascism, the justified fear of further state murders of prisoners and in an attempt to free the prisoners from the obvious attempt at subjugation and extermination in the prisons led the newly formed Holger Meins Commando of the RAF to the German embassy in Stockholm. It demanded that the German government release 26 political prisoners and threatened to blow up the embassy if it did not do so. The state refused to contact the occupiers and preferred to sacrifice its embassy staff for the sake of German state interests.

During the occupation and in response to the German government's refusal to enter into negotiations, the commando shot the diplomats Andreas von Mirbach and Heinz Hillegaart.

Siegfried Hausner, a member of Holger Meins' commando, was seriously injured during the occupation of the embassy. With burns all over his body, he was no longer able to be transported. Contrary to medical instructions, the federal government insisted on transporting him to Stuttgart-Stammheim, which was tantamount to a death sentence. They knew he would die from it, and he died.

The RAF's reaction to the tough stance of the federal government, which placed military priority over politics, was to be countered with the same logic. By shooting the two hostages, who themselves had no direct responsibility for the violent situation to which the RAF responded by murdering them, the RAF lost the moment of revolutionary morality and legitimacy in this action.

1976: Ulrike Meinhof dead after four years in the dungeons of the powerful

After the failed occupation of the embassy in Stockholm, there was no longer any visible RAF outside until 1977. The state's war against RAF prisoners, solitary confinement, special laws and special justice remained. With the verdict against the Stammheimers, the prisoners in the power's isolation cells were to disappear forever. The system of annihilation or subjugation and special justice continued unbroken.

The brutality of the ongoing state terrorist war in the prisons, which could not be stopped by Stockholm or by the prisoners' hunger strikes, shows today a historical phase in which the attempt at self-defense and, in principle, the attempt to free political prisoners from the torture of solitary confinement was justified and legitimate. The occupation of the Stockholm embassy and the RAF's '77 offensive took place under this banner.

This is also demonstrated by the successful liberation of prisoners through the kidnapping of Peter Lorenz in 1975 by the June 2nd Movement.

1977

Siegfried Buback, Federal Prosecutor General and largely responsible for the repression of the time and in particular for his orders for solitary confinement and special justice as well as for the murder of Holger Meins, Siegfried Hausner and Ulrike Meinhof, was killed by the RAF's Ulrike Meinhof commando. From the perspective of those who were aware of the violent relationships in capitalism and who perceived or were affected by the extreme state violence of the time, this act was a form of legitimate counter-violence and self-defense. Denying this connection cannot in any way capture the historical reality.

This was the beginning of Offensive '77, with which the RAF attempted to end the "special detention" of the RAF prisoners by liberating them and to enable a reorientation of the RAF and the prisoners.

She wanted to kidnap the head of the Dresden bank, Jürgen Ponto, but failed and ended with his unintentional killing.

Schleier kidnapping 1977: "Those responsible for the crisis team decided to sacrifice Schleyer for the sake of state."

During the kidnapping of Hans Martin Schleyer, four police officers, Schleyer's bodyguards, were shot dead.

The federal government declared a state of emergency. The executive branch assumed decision-making power in the crisis team. The press declared itself to be in line.

Historically, the state of emergency at that time represents the fascist power option that bourgeois democracy can use in capitalism. It also represents the elite's willingness to use it when necessary.

Those responsible for the crisis team decided to sacrifice Schleyer for reasons of state. They refused to exchange him for the prisoners. This was the state's decision for a purely military solution. This was accompanied by discussions in the crisis team at the time about shooting RAF prisoners every hour. All of this speaks of the government's responsibility for the course of history.

The RAF responded, in the hope of persuading the ruling crisis team to adopt a different stance, by authorizing a commando of the Palestinian PFLP to hijack an airplane carrying innocent civilians.

The Offensive '77 completely isolated the RAF. It created a situation in which the entire left turned away from it and the RAF closed itself off to the left. Revolutionary

an anti-imperialist and social revolutionary urban guerrilla of the awakening from 1970 to '72 ended up in a militaristic dynamic with the dividing line between oneself and the enemy as a now subjectivist consciousness.

The lack of pause since the defeat of '77 – meant as a collective conclusion, summary, reflection, new justification and change of strategy – characterized the policy of the primacy of the RAF's practice from '79 through the 1980s. 1979 would quite obviously have been the time for social analysis or class analysis and a re-positioning of the fundamental opposition in the form of the RAF. The re-formation of the RAF in 1984 would also have provided reason to pause, as would the epochal break in 1989.

After 1977, the state used a manhunt against the guerrillas: no prisoners were taken. Willy Peter Stoll and Elisabeth von Dyck were deliberately shot by the police without resistance. Rolf Heißler survived a shot to the head when he entered an apartment, but was seriously injured.

The harsh repression and massive criminalization reached large parts of the left and forced various legal activists to go underground in the course of the 1980s in order to avoid arbitrary arrests. Some ended up in exile for many years. The climate of repression, not only against the RAF, was extraordinary and, if seriously examined, its structure and form since the 1970s can only be seen as state terrorism.

1989

There came a turning point and the hunger strike of the political prisoners.

The permanent state of emergency, designed to destroy or subjugate the political prisoners, continued into its 19th year as a form of terror.

19 years of a state of emergency in prisons meant 19 years of isolation, sometimes in the form of small group isolation. 19 years of isolation as white torture and internationally condemned. 19 years of various hunger strikes as the remaining possibility of fighting for survival and dignity and of defending oneself against torture and extermination.

Günter Sonnenberg, who was seriously wounded by a gunshot wound to the head, was denied appropriate life-sustaining treatment by the state for many years, which would have been a prerequisite for his release. Sigurd Debus died during a hunger strike against solitary confinement torture.

The misery of prisons and solitary confinement torture was endless.

The turning point and the hunger strike of the prisoners occurred in the same year, 1989. It was the end of real socialism and a decisive change in the global coordinates between real socialism, liberation movements and capitalism.

With the hunger strike in 1989, the prisoners tried one last time to collectively bring about a change in their situation. They also declared that they wanted to initiate

have been the prerequisite for the necessary strategic repositioning of the urban guerrilla.

An urban guerrilla that was also socially revolutionary and not just anti-imperialist might have had the chance to bring together the movements that emerged independently of the RAF in the late 1970s and 1980s, some of which were also militant: the house-to-house fighting movement, the anti-nuclear movement, the anti-NATO movement, the feminist movement and the solidarity movements with the liberation movements of the Tricontinent, into a socially revolutionary and anti-imperialist fundamental opposition. Then it would undoubtedly not have been possible to focus on the RAF/state conflict within the international coordinates and to set a militaristic dynamic in motion.

But the RAF was only committed to itself and did not manage to break out of it in the 1980s.

Politics from 1977 and throughout the 1980s involved only a few people. The radical left largely became spectators in the conflict between the anti-imperialist RAF and the state.

1984

The militaristic actions of the second half of the 1980s, which were rightly criticized as incomprehensible, had little political connection to society and remained abstract and subjectivist, were based on the strategic errors that had occurred in 1977 and were declared a concept in 1982.

With the lack of revision of the strategic errors since '77 and their conceptualization in May '82, a militaristic logic took on a life of its own in the course of the 1980s, which, from a revolutionary perspective, brought moments of loss of the moral compass of the revolution and moments of loss of legitimacy into the struggle.

The shooting of Gerold von Braunmühl in 1986 is an expression of this. The lack of response by RAF militants to legitimate questions posed by the von Braunmühl brothers at the time is a further expression of political weakness and the destructive development after '77.

From the failure to come to terms with the '77 offensive as a phase of militaristic logic and the resulting lack of revision, to the militaristic strategy of May '82, in which the social question mutated into an abstraction detached from society and in which class struggle only played an abstract role, and the equally class-struggle-free and militaristic independence with the unjustified killing of the US soldier Pimental, it was precisely a coherent path.

The reduction to anti-imperialism and "politics of assassination" after '77 tells more about subjectivism and the independence of the military from the political than about class struggle and social revolutionary processes. The primacy of the practice of

goals that attempted to achieve a social impact were no longer a visible and direct element of its actions. It acted primarily for itself and therefore subjectivistically. It escalated the question of power against the state on a purely military level and thus opened a duel against the state that it could only lose.

The military dynamics ran counter to political analysis. The isolated and subjectivist struggle was the precondition for an unjustifiable hijacking that ran counter to revolutionary principles and the idea of revolution as class struggle.

The killing of the four police officers as a prerequisite for negotiations is difficult to understand today and corresponds to a purely military logic. The killing of Ponto was not intentional and in itself ran counter to a realistic negotiating position for the release of the prisoners. Therefore, this action is part of the actions of the offensive at the time, which had lost its revolutionary legitimacy.

October 18, 1977

The German government had rejected any political solution and risked the lives of the hostages by storming the plane in Mogadishu for the sake of German state interests.

Gudrun Enslin, Jan Raspe and Andreas Baader did not survive the night of October 18th in Stammheim. Irmgard Möller survived with serious injuries and declared: It was murder.

With Schleyer died a man who went down in history as the right-hand man of the SS leader Heydrich, head of the Protectorate of Czech Bohemia/Moravia, which was occupied by the Nazi state. Schleyer was a careerist in the SS and responsible for the deportation of more than 40,000 Jews to the German extermination camps. As a person, he was partly responsible for the extermination of the Jews in the Shoah.

He died as the personified continuity of Nazi perpetrators who made careers in the Federal Republic of Germany after 1945 and whose elite he represented. He died as the boss of bosses, as the person responsible for the exploitative conditions of the capitalist Federal Republic of Germany state.

He also died as a prisoner of the RAF.

The death of the Nazi perpetrator and the representative of the continuity of Nazi fascism in West German capitalism is certainly not a moment of mourning.

Killing a prisoner or hostage is per se a moment of weakness and even a moment of defeat.

The defeat of '77 marked the beginning of long phases in which the military dominated the visible path of the RAF before the political moment. The military confrontation between the guerrillas and the state was the focus of politics, unlike during the May '72 offensive.

'77 shows that armed struggle can only work if it is part of political movements

and is politically committed to them. Armed struggle is always only one possibility for revolutionary movements and not something that can work on its own. The isolated guerrilla always runs the risk of entering into a militaristic and subjectivist dynamic. In the conflict based on military logic, it can only lose in the metropolis.

The RAF was completely isolated after '77. It had no base and had decided against social revolutionary politics in '77.

The militaristic moment of Offensive '77 marked the beginning of a policy focused on assassinations for the next 14 years.

The dissolving base of the guerrilla by the mid-1970s had led the Stammheim prisoners in their statements of 1976 to begin to emphasize that the RAF in anti-imperialism was beginning to distance itself from the social revolutionary and class struggle aspects of its concept of revolutionary struggle.

1979

With the attacks from 1979 to '81 against the US military and two of its generals as high decision-makers and co-responsible for the most aggressive and powerful part of Western imperialism, the RAF ushered in the policy of urban guerrilla warfare focused on anti-imperialism. From then on, it sought its purpose in the international coordinates between liberation and the counter-strategy of imperialism. It saw itself – and was – part of the anti-imperialist liberation movements of the world. However, it was separated from the social conditions of its battle terrain. It shifted its analysis to the coordinates between liberation and imperialism. It only knew the world proletariat, which mutated into an abstraction without orientation to the social conditions.

May 1982

The strategy statement of the "May Paper", which formulated the RAF's policy and contained its purpose, conceptualized the mistakes of '77 and laid the groundwork for the 1980s. The idea of politics in the '82 concept was an anti-imperialism whose focus was no longer on the consciousness of the society in which it fought. The bombs against the state and US imperialism had been planted. What was not intended were bombs in the consciousness of society.

It was a departure from the strategic principles of the "urban guerrilla concept" of 1972. The RAF's anti-imperialism was now detached from any social revolutionary strategy.

The offer to others was militant attack or militancy in general at various levels in the context of the guerrilla's anti-imperialist strategy and under its leadership.

In doing so, it appropriated a concept of avant-garde, with which it declared itself

to be the avant-garde. However, whether something is avant-garde is ultimately decided by the course of history and the potential to bring others into the revolutionary struggle.

Due to the RAF's lack of class analysis and its reduction to anti-imperialism in international coordinates, politics remained abstract and did not lead the guerrillas out of their isolation throughout the 1980s. Isolation here means isolation in a social relationship. The RAF was deeply connected and organized with comrades in the resistance and other small urban guerrilla groups, especially Action Directe from France, on the anti-imperialist and Western European fronts. But that was not enough for the revolutionary process, which fundamentally develops in a social context.

Without the social reference and without the primacy of the political, politics remained subjectivist and did not lead it out of the duel between state and guerrilla.

This was not changed by the "Fighting Units" strategically linked to the RAF or by militant groups calling themselves otherwise, who carried out a large number of arson and bomb attacks throughout the 1980s – for example, in 1982: militant actions against Siemens, AEG, US military barracks; 1984/85 Turkish consulate, NATO pipelines, NATO/US/German armed forces facilities, US secret service, Interior Ministry in Hanover, AEG data center; 1988 Renault branch, Deutsche Bank training center; 1989 Frankfurt Stock Exchange; 1990 Deutsche Bank data center and many more – all militant, non-armed actions in which the killing of human life was excluded and never happened.

In reality, the Western European front was weak and could not replace the missing strategy in social relations, which as a fundamental opposition could only have been social revolutionary and anti-imperialist.

The policy, reduced to anti-imperialism and free of class struggle, was an immense strategic mistake and was rightly criticized, for example, by the Belgian CCC, the Belgian communist urban guerrilla group of the 1980s, and completely ignored by the RAF throughout the 1980s.

The factual and historical prerequisites for a redefinition of politics since 1979 would have been both the completely isolated RAF and its reasons as well as the class situation in neoliberalism: the pacified proletarian layers, the integration of the proletariat with the promise of mass consumption in the metropolises; as well as isolation as a neoliberal principle of life, which was a result of the restructuring of industry in globalized neoliberalism. This was also a consequence of capitalism in response to the uprisings in the factories at the end of the 1960s and beginning of the 1970s, as had occurred in Italy and France. The rulers feared the "mass worker" and preferred the isolation of the population in production and society.

The development of the worldwide liberation movements, the strategies of NATO in the coordinates between liberation and imperialism and the existence of various large, naturally reformist but partly also militant sub-sector movements would also